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Future Life in the Light of Ancient Wisdom and Modern Science, by LOUIS ELBÉ. A. C. McClurg Co., Chicago, 1906. pp. xxviii, 382.

The object of this book is to present, in popular form, the evidence for human immortality. It is divided into two parts, the first appealing to the *consensus gentium*, the second to the results of modern science. In the former, the author passes in rapid review the testimony of prehistoric traditions and remains, the beliefs of savages, and the ideas of life after death entertained by Chinese, Egyptians, Hindus, Chaldeans, Gauls, Jews, Greeks and Romans. The notion of immortality "sums up the whole teaching of ancient wisdom." There follows a chapter on Christianity, with discussions of the Roman Catholic doctrine of purgatory and the Protestant conception of conditional immortality; and the part ends with a review of two modern systems, whose main tenets are drawn from antiquity,—spiritism and theosophy. The first of these makes man "a fallen god who remembers;" the second, a future god who is attempting to climb to heaven.

Passing to science, the author points out that astronomy suggests to us the possibility of a plurality of worlds and, by banishing a material heaven and hell, transfers the scene of our final destinies to an immaterial plane. Physics gives us the law of the indestructibility of matter and energy, which includes the indestructibility of past events, including the events of our consciousness. As physics appeals to the ether as the source of the most diverse manifestations of energy, so we may appeal to etheric radiations or an astral envelope as forming the necessary link between the immaterial soul and the physical body of man. True, "we are always confronted with a fundamental difficulty in endeavoring to prove the distinct existence" of an odic fluid; it still remains to be proved "that the deviations of the biometric needle are amenable to no other explanation;" the authenticity of photographs "is still a matter of dispute;" and experiments with phosphorescing calcium sulphide do no more—alas! poor Odic!—than identify the radiations with the *n*-rays of Blondlot. Still, when we take into account their externalization in the ethereal double, and the facts of long-distance telepathy, we are forced to admit that "the etheric movements by which we are wont to explain the action of the physical forces are not possessed of more certain reality;" and what carries conviction in the one case should do so in the other. Thus formulated, faith in survival seems "to be the inevitable consequence of the scientific conception of the human soul."

M. Elbé writes brightly, and his book is readable. He has a good deal of critical acumen, and a distinct power of marshalling arguments. But this book will, of course, convince those and those only who are already prepared to accept its conclusion.

H. E. HOTCHKISS.

Sociological Papers, II. By F. GALTON, P. GEDDES, M. E. SADLER, E. WESTERMARCK, H. HOFFDING, J. H. BRIDGES and J. S. STUART-GLENNIE. Macmillan & Co., London, 1906. pp. xiii, 312.

The eleven original papers published in this volume fully maintain the high level of work reached in the previous publication of the Sociological Society. We here find sociology approached by many paths and envisaged in various ways; we find the widest divergence of opinion; but we also find an earnest spirit of co-operation, and a refreshing amount of solid thinking.

The historical approach to sociology is represented by Dr. Bridges' paper on "Some Guiding Principles in the Philosophy of History," and by three articles from the pen of Mr. Stuart-Glennie, entitled